

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
January 16 & 17, 2007**

The regular meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9 A.M., on January 16, 2007, in Room 1D2 of the Transportation Building in Olympia, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair Ford, Ed Barnes, Bob Distler, Elmira Forner, Carol Moser, Dan O'Neal and Dale Stedman.

**MINUTES APPROVAL**

*The Commission moved to approve the November 14 & 15, 2006 and December 12 & 13, 2006 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.*

**REPORT TO LEGISLATURE ON TRANSPORTATION INNOVATIVE  
PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM**

Jeff Doyle, Director, Transportation Innovative Partnerships, WSDOT, presented the *draft* TIPP Report to the Commission for review and comment. Commissioners, after review and discussion, gave several suggested edits and recommended additions to the report. Mr. Doyle noted that the edits would be included in the report prior to its final printing and distribution.

*It was moved by Commissioner Forner and seconded by Commissioner O'Neal to approve the Transportation Innovative Partnership Program Report for calendar year ending 2006 with suggested edits. The motion passed unanimously.*

**COMMISSION STAFF REPORTS**

Paul Parker, Senior Policy Analyst, WSTC, presented the *draft* Commission Outreach Plan for review and comment. Commissioners cautioned that the plan needs to represent the entire state geographical with an emphasis on region specific language. In the Commission's Strategic Plan a Commission forum would be held every three-five years. If the Commission plans to hold this forum in 2008 now is the time to address this in the Outreach Plan. This may require a budget request.

Chair Ford requested that Commissioner Moser work with staff on the Commission's Outreach Plan. He requested that they prepare a written draft tactical approach to routine outreach and an outline of what the advantages of having a three-five year forum.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Secretary MacDonald, WSDOT, shared information regarding WSF's budget and fare setting situation, noting that the primary issues are fares, vessel procurement and terminal expansion. He moved on to share that now that the Legislature is in session it's an excellent time for the Department to pose the question "How are we doing with project delivery?" He shared that the record to date is strong, not perfect, but very strong.

He explained that most of the problems are due to the rising costs of major civil projects. These costs have risen sharply and there are fewer bidders. The Governor's proposed 2007-2009 Transportation Budget has suggested a number of approaches to continue making progress with the improvement program for Washington's highway system, despite the difficult cost environment. For further information please visit [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects) and [www.wsdot.wa.gov/accountability](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/accountability).

### **TACOMA NARROWS BRIDGE-CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE TOLL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Bob Ryan, Chairman, Citizen Advisory Committee, explained that the CAC has been tasked with analyzing toll options and the development of recommendations for presentation to the Transportation Commission. Tolling of the eastbound directions is assumed to begin July 2007 with eastbound traffic volumes expected to decrease by about 15 percent as a result of the toll imposition. All vehicle classes can participate in the electronic toll collection and use the Good To Go express toll lanes, benefiting from the unimpeded, free-flowing traffic at all times. The Good To Go express lanes allow vehicles with Good To Go transponders to continue across the bridge without ever stopping at the toll booths. WSDOT's goal is to ensure that 50-60 percent of the morning commuters are using the Good To Go lanes.

The Tacoma Narrows Bridge Citizens Advisory Committee makes the following recommendations to the Washington State Transportation Commission with respect to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge project:

1. The cash toll price will be \$3.00 per vehicle and the electronic toll collection (ETC) price will be \$1.00 per vehicle from the opening date of toll collection until changed-if the legislature appropriates \$10 million for the purpose of reducing tolls. If the 2007 Washington State Legislature does not appropriate the sum of \$10 million and assuming the legislature will appropriate \$1.3 million that was authorized in the 2006 session, tolls should be \$3.00 and \$1.75, respectively, for the cash toll and the ETC toll.
2. The per axle charge should commence on the same date as the above toll and based upon the toll rates.
3. The tolls should not commence on or shortly before a national holiday.
4. In recognition of the facts that payment on the bonds issued to finance the Tacoma Narrows Bridge must be made semi-annually and that by law or contract covered expenses can not exceed income actually received, a reserve should be established, but such reserve should be kept at a level, not so high that an unreasonable amount accumulates and nor so low that tolls have to be changed more often than reasonably necessary in order to cover any temporary shortage.
5. At the present time no discounts or exemptions should be granted to those mentioned within the authorizing legislation of RCW 47.46.090 (2) of frequent users, senior citizens or students, in part because of the difficulty of identifying those persons within a group and assuring that there was no abuse to the system, in part because of favoring one worthy group to the expense of another worthy group and in part because of the administrative cost in administering such discounts or exemptions.
6. At the present time no discounts should be granted to carpools, transit busses, city, county or state vehicles or emergency vehicles except to the extent otherwise expressly provided by law.

7. No consideration should be given at the present time to the early retirement of the bond debt since, to do so, would cause the tolls in the near future to increase.
8. No variable or time of day pricing should be considered until after both bridges are fully operational and the DOT has traffic statistics from which a more informed decision could be made.
9. The minimum amount to establish an ETC account should be \$30.00.
10. The DOT is encouraged to include in its Good to Go! Program one or more methods whereby a merchant or business person may purchase one or more single usage passages for its customers.
11. Future legislation establishing advisory committees for future projects should be more precisely written so as to make clear that the advisory committee's recommendations only concern amounts of tolls, collection, possible discounts and exemptions, possible early retirement and variable or time of day pricing and does not concern the fairness of the imposition of tolls, the location and size of toll facilities, and lane configuration.
12. The DOT provides monthly reports to the CAC members concerning collections, expense and traffic flow.
13. The DOT assists the CAC in holding meetings every three months, commencing in October 2007.
14. To the extent practicable all fines imposed for toll violations should be returned to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll.
15. Future State of Washington highway projects costing more than the Tacoma Narrows Bridge project, such as but not limited to the Alaskan Way Viaduct and State Route 520, be funded by the State of Washington in a percentage not to exceed what the State has paid on the Narrows Bridge and, if funded to a higher percentage, then the State should buy down the tolls on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge by the same amount.

At conclusion of the presentation the Commission and Mr. Ryan held discussion regarding the 15 recommendations and the Department's management costs, maintenance, toll systems operations, insurance, contracted services, renewal and replacement repairs of the bridge and the toll systems key components. To review this presentation you may visit [http://www.wstc.wa.gov/AgendasMinutes/agendas/2007/Jan16/Jan16\\_BP4\\_CACFinalRecommend.pdf](http://www.wstc.wa.gov/AgendasMinutes/agendas/2007/Jan16/Jan16_BP4_CACFinalRecommend.pdf)

The Commission expressed concern that there is a possibility that sufficient revenue would not be collected from the tolls to pay the bonds. Mr. Ryan explained that revenue in excess of the toll collection would be requested from the Legislature as outlined in recommendation number one.

Secretary MacDonald noted that almost all of the recommendations are supported by the Department with one caveat; the Department wants to develop a pro-forma and a sensitivity analysis, and make a recommendation to the Commission. He also noted that the bridge opening date is not scheduled as of yet. The opening of the bridge and start of toll collection changes the equation. The Department plans to assemble traffic data analysis and other data to share with the Commission in the next few weeks.

The Secretary, Commissioner O'Neal and Commissioner Distler thanked the CAC for all of its hard work. Commissioner Distler requested that the Department take a look at different scenarios of the traffic loss percentage and transponder usage data.

The Commission expressed concern with the rule filing process timeline. Steve Dietrich, Assistant Attorney General, recommended to the Commission that it follow APA procedures where there are flexible provisions, namely the emergency provisions, which would allow for a meeting with virtually no notice and emergency rule adoption.

Chair Ford questioned the particulars of the amount of reserve for the payment of the debt. Mr. Ryan responded that recommendation number four addresses this question. Ultimately the reserve should not be too high or too low to precipitate excessive tolling.

Reema Griffith, Executive Director, WSTC, noted that the Commission needs to take into consideration the timetable for filing the WAC with the Code Reviser's Office to establish the rule.

The Commission requested that the Department put together scenario dates for meeting the WAC filing calendar timetable.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Randy Boss, resident of Gig Harbor, shared his concerns regarding the bond issues and toll setting on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. Among other things he advocated a flat \$3 toll with no discounts.

Don Williams, citizen, expressed his concerns regarding the CAC recommendations and the fairness of the tolling structure. He argued that WSDOT had effectively promised a \$3 toll. He feels that there should be discounts as an incentive to use transponders.

### **COMMISSION STAFF REPORTS**

Reema Griffith, Executive Director, presented agency request legislation Senate Bill 5264 - Facility Naming, noting that the House Bill has not yet been presented. She also presented a Commission calendar with Commissioner hearing attendance assignments. She explained the WAC filing timeline scenarios for the implementation of TNB toll setting.

Ms. Griffith provided a brief overview of the Commission's Current Law Budget appropriation for the 2007-2009 Biennium.

She also noted that a moratorium was placed on TIPP unsolicited proposals until July 2008.

Paul Parker, Senior Policy Analyst, WSTC, presented the Commission's *draft* Legislative 2006 Annual Report for final review and comment. Commissioner's provided constructive suggestions for modification of graphics in the report.

***It was moved by Commissioner Forner and seconded by Commissioner Moser to approve the 2006 Annual Report with recommended edits. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Distler reported that he has been working closely with WSF on various ferry related issues. He expressed a concern that while email exchanges between Commissioners are productive and informative, but due to public disclosure requirements suggests that the Commission consider establishing a blog. Ms. Griffith will discuss this suggestion with the Commission's Assistant Attorney General for written opinion.

Commissioner Barnes shared that he is following the I-5/Delta Park/Columbia Crossing projects and other projects in the Clark County area closely.

Commissioner Moser shared information regarding Rail-Ex. She shared that during its 13-week operation it has made 13 trips with a maximum delay of six hours. She feels that this model helps provides a sustainable economic flow for Eastern Washington agricultural industry. A new facility is in the works as well.

Commissioner Forner reported that she attend a local RTPO/MPO meeting where the discussions primary focus was the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). The group expressed that it hopes that the Legislature utilizes the report in its prioritizing and funding projects.

Chair Ford reported that the Commission's presentation of the WTP was well received by the Senate and House Transportation Committees. He shared that he recently participated in a meeting with state and local officials and business community members regarding the Alaskan Way Viaduct issue. On another note, he shared that Jennifer Ziegler has been selected as the Governor's appointee to the Commission.

## **TARIFF POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON 2007 FERRY FARE ADJUSTMENTS**

Chair Ford noted that the Alice Tawresey, Chair, Tariff Policy Committee, was unable to attend today's meeting.

Ray Deardorf, Planning Director, Finance, Washington State Ferries, presented a summary of the Tariff Policy Committee's recommendation on the 2007 Ferry Fare Adjustments effective May 1, 2007.

The Tariff Policy Committee recommends for the May 1, 2007, proposal:

- **General Fare Increase.** 2.5 percent general fare increase with nickel rounding and continued Tariff Route Equity (TRE) phasing.
- General fare increase is applied to Seattle-Bainbridge and all other routes are adjusted based on their TRE relationships.
- TRE phasing results in an additional 5 percentage point fare increase on the San Juan Inter-island route, the only route not yet in TRE alignment.
- Continue tariff review analysis this Spring to address SmartCard and the Joint Transportation Committee's Ferry Finance Study tariff-related recommendations. Depending upon the outcome of the legislative session, hold open the option of another fare adjustment for October 2007 implementation, if additional fare revenue above what is generated by the 2.5 percent increase is needed.
- **In-need organizations.** Extend the sunset clause on the program for in-need

- organizations to April 30, 2008, and modify the program as follows:
- Eliminate volume/frequency requirements for qualifying trips, to streamline program management and minimize WSF administrative costs.
- Bill monthly and apply credits at a rate approximating applicable frequent-user discounts.
- **Peak Season Oversize Vehicle Fares.** Adjust peak season fare calculations for methodology for oversize vehicles to match original policy intent, with WAC language changes as follows:
- **PEAK SEASON SURCHARGE** – A peak season surcharge of 25% shall apply to all oversize vehicles, ~~except for Anacortes to Lopez, Shaw, Orcas, and Friday Harbor.~~ The oversize fare shall be determined based on the peak-season car and-driver fare, adjusted by the relationship between the base season car-and-driver fare and the analogous oversize vehicle fare. The senior citizen discount shall apply to the driver of an oversize vehicle. ~~A 35% surcharge will apply to oversized vehicles traveling from Anacortes to Lopez, Shaw, Orcas and Friday Harbor.~~
- **Management Discretion for EFS/SmartCard Implementation Issues.** Allow WSF management additional discretion to resolve fare-related operational issues resulting from implementation of the EFS and SmartCard by temporarily modifying certain fare rules or individual fares, after which WSF would bring the issues back to the TPC and Transportation Commission for policy guidance. The following addition to the WAC is proposed:  
**FARE COLLECTION SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION**-In order to streamline and expedite the implementation of regional fare collection systems, such as the EFS and SmartCard, WSF may temporarily adjust fares or other wise modify certain fare rules.
- **SmartCard Monthly Passes.** Monthly passes that are purchased as part of the regional SmartCard Program shall revert to unlimited use (passes would still be deemed “non-transferable”). Since SmartCard media is not reproducible, the need for limiting trips is eliminated. Monthly passes purchased through EFS would retain their current monthly usage limits.
- **Anacortes-Sidney RV Promotional Fare.** Due to the success of the program to date, TPC recommends continuation of the special Anacortes-Sidney recreational vehicle and bus promotional fare.
- **Market Survey.** TPC strongly encourages the legislature to fund the market survey recommended in the JTC Ferry Finance Study, in order to assist in future Tariff cycles where time-of-day pricing and other transportation demand management strategies will be evaluated.

Mr. Deardorf indicated that today’s discussion would include the Tariff Proposal and a WSF staff proposal for a pilot program for the Port Townsend/Keystone route this summer.

Chair Ford noted that the management discretion issue would need to be carefully drafted in a readable fashion.

Commissioner O’Neal noted that the car and driver reduction for Central Sound is amazingly high for the multi-ride product in comparison with the Anacortes/Friday Harbor run.

Mr. Deardorf explained that the Anacortes to San Juan's multi-user rate is unique because of the base being five round trips as opposed to ten.

Commissioner Distler pointed out that the multi-ride fares were at one time calculated based on the full-fare multiplied by the number of rides less a discount, and asked whether we are now raising them lock step by 2.5 percent or are we still doing the multiplication. Mr. Deardorf responded that it's still based on the base season fare.

Mr. Deardorf noted that the revenue impacts of the general fare increase proposal of 2.5 percent for the last two months of this fiscal year is estimated at about \$600 thousand and in fiscal year 2008, the first full year of the new fares, the estimate is that they will generate \$2.8 million in added revenue. The total is thus about \$3.4 million for the entire proposal for 14 months.

Commissioner Distler noted that there would presumably be a May 2008 increase that would add to those figures for the last two months of the biennium.

Mr. Deardorf explained that the 2.5 percent increase is in line with legislative budget assumptions from last year, and is also the assumption in the Governor's budget. Subsequent to publication of that budget, WSF became aware that there needs to be a technical correction in the Governor's budget of about a \$17.5 million increase for the next biennium.

Chair Ford commented that the Governor's current budget proposes that farebox will produce \$324.4 million in the new biennium. Does the \$17.5 million adjustment go on top of that? And if so, then the total is \$341.4 million. At face value OFM assumes that the farebox will produce about \$33 million more in this biennium than in the last biennium. There is \$24 million that needs to come from somewhere.

Commissioner Distler questioned where the \$24 million difference comes from. Mr. Deardorf responded that there is some revenue growth associated with a projected increase in traffic, and there is some residual effect from the last fare increase as well.

Commissioner O'Neal questioned if this residual effect is apparent in previous bienniums. Mr. Deardorf responded that that is accurate.

Chair Ford expressed that there are expectations being given to the Legislature on farebox recovery, not just from the tariffs, but all revenue. The Commission's role is to share in meeting those expectations. If the expectation is not met then there might be a supplemental appropriation. One of the questions is; if the request is 2.5 percent this time are we going to be faced with a six or seven percent increase to catch up in a year or so? This is a very difficult situation.

Commissioner Moser noted that the ferry system is treated so differently than the rest of the highway system. The entire fare structure is so difficult and confusing. The ferry system and tolling system should be matched. Mr. Deardorf agreed that the system and fares are very complex.

Chair Ford indicated that the Ferry Finance Study has laid out a number of recommendations that presumably the Commission will have some role in implementing. Commissioner Distler noted that the ferry system is at least two things; the car carrying is part of the highway system-when you drive your car on the highway, the state provides the

right-of-way and you provide the driver, gas, oil and the maintenance. The problem with the ferry system is that when you drive your vehicle onto a ferry you don't provide any of the operating expense. The state provides the labor and fuel and all of the other things that it takes to run the vessel, all of which is very expensive. The passenger part of the ferry system is much like a transit system-the economic problem in trying to assess what the passenger fares should be is complicated because, the incremental cost of providing passenger capacity on a car ferry is virtually zero. The incremental cost of providing a seat on a ferry is much lower than the incremental cost of a seat on a bus. Apart from the fact that whether used by a tourist or a commuter, they are two very different units of capacity mixed together and co-produced by a vehicle ferry.

Commissioner Forner noted that transit systems receive federal and state funding, whereas the ferry system is state funding only.

Commissioner O'Neal commented that there are a lot of implications in the system, and where the ferries land is one of those. Greater consideration should be given to the impacts on communities where ferries land. He noted that today's ferry system is driven by auto ferries. We might have a totally different and perhaps more affordable system if the focus were on moving people and not automobiles. The implications for communities served by auto ferries are significant because the terminals and vehicle waiting areas necessary to service those ferries create social, business, and monetary challenges for those communities even though members of the communities may not be primary users of the system. Port Townsend is a primary example. Communities like Seattle do not want more automobiles. We should be considering whether the approach we have always taken is sustainable.

Chair Ford asked if WSF has confidence that if the Commission goes with a 2.5 percent level of fare increase for this year that the Commission will meet the expectation of the Governor's budget and will not be faced with extraordinary increases next year. He explained that this troubles him based on the fact that a supplemental appropriation may be requested to balance it out.

Mr. Deardorf explained that the 2.5 percent increase originated in last year's legislative budget assumptions and the Governor's budget this year. The TPC held discussion on this issue. At the end of the legislative session if more farebox revenue is needed then 2.5 percent would generate then there would be the flexibility of opening up the process again in June and implementing another increase in October.

Commissioner Distler referred to a budget sheet based on the Governor's budget, and a look out to 2023. Essentially what it says is that if you raise fares 2.5 percent every year at the end of the 16 years the ferry system will have generated \$653.6 million from fares and miscellaneous income that it can transfer to the capital program. The long-term assumptions and the calculations that are behind the Governor's budget is that the ferry system can raise fares by an amount that approximates inflation every year for 16 years, operate its network and contribute two thirds of a billion dollars to the capital program. If this were true then why was there a need for a ferry finance study?

Commissioner O'Neal asked if the Legislature would be willing to subsidize the \$93 million. It's less than the last subsidy.

Commissioner Distler reminded him that there is a \$17.5 million error in that calculation.



Commissioner Forner explained that she feels the numbers don't seem quite accurate.

Commissioner Distler advised that she keep in mind that the assumptions behind the presumed net subsidy available include all of the tax contributions.

Commissioner O'Neal noted that it's not a very good indicator when the first year shows that we've gone from a \$101 million subsidy to a \$110 million subsidy required.

Commissioner Distler explained that he views that if the people of the state of Washington think that the system is sustainable at fare increases approximating inflation then there really is not a problem. He submits that there is a big problem. Ferry fares are a residual calculation that are the result of the operating expenses less what the Legislature is capable of and or willing to put into the budget.

Commissioner Stedman asked if there are over 2000 different fares. Commissioner Distler explained that it sounds huge, but there are a multitude of combinations of vehicular size and route as well as additional groups.

Chair Ford questioned whether a 2.5 percent increase in May 2007, 2008 and 2009 would add up to a \$10 million yield assuming that the traffic flow projections are accurate-can we count on the fact it's adequate!

Mr. Deardorf responded that's the best estimate at this time.

Chair Ford expressed his concern that there might be huge increases a year from now.

Commissioner O'Neal noted that if the Legislature does not come through with \$104 million this biennium there will have to be a higher increase.

Mr. Deardorf explained the issues with the EFS and SmartCard implementation. He noted that there has been difficulty in the collection, coordination and management. Traci Brewer-Rogstad, Operations Director, WSF, stated that WSF has been working with the agencies involved, but there is no clear solution as of yet.

Chair Ford summed up the discussion regarding EFS/SmartCard noting that the division of fares is the real problem. Mr Deardorf responded yes.

Commissioner Distler stated that the purpose of the temporary authority is for WSF to facilitate the implementation of SmartCard - not to get around the normal tariff setting process for through fares.

Chair Ford noted that it is going to be very important in drafting the language that this is not a delegation of agency responsibility. Commissioner Distler interjected through inter-modal travel.

Steve Dietrich, Assistant Attorney General, noted that in general this needs to be worked on—he explained that the Legislature delegated the authority to the Commission to set the tariffs. There must be very well defined sideboards put on it.

Ms. Griffith asked if there is a timeline on delegating this temporary authority. Mr. Deardorf explained that the WAC process would have to be reopened.

Mr. Deardorf moved on to explain that if monthly passes that are purchased as part of the regional SmartCard Program, these cards shall have unlimited use (passes would still be deemed “non-transferable”). Since SmartCard media is not reproducible, the need for limiting trips is mitigated. Monthly passes purchased through EFS will retain their current monthly usage limits.

Mr. Deardorf explained that due to the success of the program to date, TPC affirms continuation of the special Anacortes-Sidney recreational vehicle and bus promotional fare.

In closing Mr. Deardorf noted that the TPC strongly encourages the legislature to fund the market survey recommended in the JTC Ferry Finance Study, in order to assist in future Tariff cycles where time-of-day pricing and other transportation demand management strategies will be evaluated.

Commissioners expressed their concerns about the congestion pricing proposal which is in part a route reservation system.

Mr. Dietrich explained that by limiting WSF’s discretion there is less potential for a delegation problem. He suggested that WSF further research the fares, figure it out and bring them to the Commission for review. The Commission could allow the WSF to implement as needed.

Commissioners agreed that WSF should bring a reservation fare proposal back to the Commission.

Mr. Deardorf indicated that the tariff proposal would be filed with the Code Reviser’s Office no later than February 7, 2007, which is before the February Commission meeting. This is to keep in line with the Tariff Hearing on March 22, 2007. If however the Commission is willing to have the tariff adoption hearing on March 27, the filing would move forward to right after the Commission’s February meeting.

***It was moved by Commissioner O’Neal and seconded by Commissioner Barnes to adopt, the 2.5 percent proposal and the other changes, subject to review and approval by counsel.***

Commissioner Distler expressed that it is ludicrous to raise fares by an amount equal to the inflation rate. This sends the wrong message and the assumptions are inaccurate. He noted that he would vote against any increase that is less than four percent.

Commissioner O’Neal expressed concern that the 2.5 percent proposal by the Tariff Policy Committee is being dismissed out of hand. It is in line with the Governor’s budget and has been agreed to by the Tariff Policy Committee.

Commissioner Distler pointed out that the decision by the TPC was by a very close vote.

***Commissioner Distler moved that the proposal be amended to a four percent fare increase across the board. Commissioner Forner seconded the motion. Commissioner O’Neal stated he would view the proposal as a friendly amendment. The amendment passed unanimously. Thus the Commission voted to raise fares by 4 percent versus the 2.5 percent originally proposed***

***Commissioner Distler moved to amend the motion by removing the provision applicable to the Port Townsend/Keystone route. He moved that the so- called congestion pricing/peak pricing pilot program in Port Townsend not be a part of the motion.***

Commissioner O’Neal opposed the motion and suggested that what was being proposed was unnecessary regulation that would restrict badly needed innovation. The Commission should not engage in micro managing. Discretion should be given to WSF to experiment with pricing as long as it was done within boundaries that could be legally approved by the Commission. Chair Ford agreed with Commissioner O’Neal’s suggestion. He noted that not more than half of the ferry could be reserved. The question is whether WSF should be given the discretion to determine which sailings had reservations available. The proposed language “to implement discounts for off-peak travel for no more than fifty percent of the applicable fares” would be deleted.

***Commissioner Distler requested to restate the amendment. He moved that the portion of the original motion as currently amended relating to the Port Townsend/Keystone pilot pricing program be removed. Commissioner Forner seconded the amendment. The amendment failed with Commissioners Distler and Forner voting yes and five Commissioners voting no. Thus, discretion to implement the pilot program was supported by the Commission subject to Counsel making any necessary adjustments in the proposed rule language to ensure it conformed to laws.***

Senator Chris Marr, reminisced his seven-year term serving as a Commissioner. He finds that not a lot has changed in transportation – it’s the same problems, they’re just bigger. What has changed is that people are beginning to realize that they must play a part in the solution process.

***Chair Ford put the question of the sunset clause expiration date of the discount program on the table for consideration. He proposed that it be extended until April 30, 2008. Commissioner Distler moved the question and Commissioner Barnes seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

***It was moved by Commissioner Moser and seconded by Commissioner Barnes to adjust the peak season fare calculations for oversized vehicles as proposed and to restore the unlimited ride provision to monthly pass on SmartCard. The motion passed unanimously.***

Chair Ford referred to the dissolution of the Tariff Policy Committee and its current membership structure. He proposed that a letter be sent to the committee members advising them that the Commission, in light of the Ferry Finance Study, is revisiting the question of how this type of committee will be utilized in the future. The Commission will be moving forward with the recommended market survey.

***It was moved by Commissioner Distler and seconded by Commissioner Forner that the Commission Chair would prepare a letter to the Tariff Policy Committee explaining the Commission’s decision to dissolve the committee. The motion passed unanimously.***

***It was moved by Commissioner Forner and seconded by Commissioner Barnes that Chair Ford and Commissioner O’Neal continue to sit on the Executive Board and Operations Committee of the Puget Sound Regional Council with Commissioner O’Neal as member and Chair Ford as alternate. The motion passed unanimously.***

The Commission meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m., on January 17, 2007.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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DICK FORD, Chair

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ELMIRA FORNER, Vice-Chair

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EDWARD BARNES, Member

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CAROL MOSER, Member

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DAN O’NEAL, Member

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ROBERT S. DISTLER, Member

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DALE STEDMAN, Member

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DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member  
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

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REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

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DATE OF APPROVAL